

## Editorial Sample B

### The Value of Video Games: Playing to Learn

By Jill

Imagine a mother pulling her two sons away from a favorite computer game to do their homework. She hated to remove them from the deep levels of thinking that was occurring to study spelling words, an activity which requires no deep thinking at all. This mother is only one of many parents, educators, and researchers who is pushing to bring digital games into the classroom.

Often labeled as excessively violent or a breeding ground for anti-social behavior, video and computer games are now being looked at in an entirely different way by a growing army of educational researchers. Backed by a \$3 million grant from Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the researchers not only accept that kids are drawn to the games, they see the educational value in playing to learn.

Video games, if designed with educational purposes in mind, can promote higher order thinking, such as synthesis and analysis. According to research, reading skills, vocabulary, and problem-solving skills have been shown to increase as a result of infusing video games into schools (Bakkus 2004).

"Kid's brains have been rewired. They now learn differently, at a different speed. Effectively, we're dealing with a different target audience, and we need to accommodate that," said SFU's David Kaufman, project leader for SAGE. He went on to add that bringing video games into the classroom will clearly meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

It is obvious that there is great potential for using video games to really challenge players in educationally valuable ways. It's time to bring digital games into the classroom!